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North Carolina

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

September 2015



Division 14

COUNTIES SERVED | Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Swain, Transylvania

Gov. McCrory Appoints Nick Tennyson Secretary of Transportation



Nick Tennyson is sworn in as Secretary of Transportation

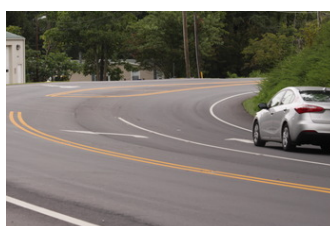
In early August, Governor Pat McCrory announced the appointment of Nick Tennyson as the new Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Tennyson previously served as Chief Deputy Secretary since March 2013, and succeeds Tony Tata.

"Nick Tennyson is the perfect choice to continue the momentum we have made in North Carolina's transportation strategy," said Governor McCrory. "He has been involved in planning all of our key transportation strategies over the last two and half years, and is equipped to hit the ground running to continue our progress."

Secretary Tennyson and the NCDOT team will continue to focus on expanding and safely maintaining our transportation network through the Governor's 25 Year Vision, support new funding strategies including the bonds to Connect NC, strengthen our ports to make our state more globally competitive and deliver other infrastructure projects to help grow the state's economy and create jobs. [Learn More](#)

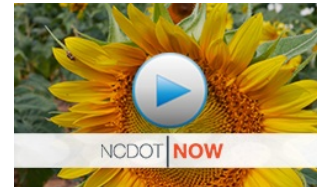
Safer Drive on Howard Gap in Henderson County

Bicycle, or BMW? "The choice is harder now," admits avid cyclist Kayla Rohm, now that Howard Gap Road has been widened all the way from



Howard Gap improvements include new turn lanes

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NCDOT Now

NCDOT Now

On this week's NCDOT Now, NCDOT partners with the N.C. Department of Agriculture on creating pollinator habitats in wildflowers beds, tickets available now for special train stops at the North Carolina State Fair and the Lexington Barbecue Festival in October, and ferry crews help rescue a father and son in Swan Quarter Bay. [Watch here.](#)

Fletcher to just east of Hendersonville. "When I'm driving, I look over and want to put that bike lane pavement to use."

The N.C. Department of Transportation has upgraded a three-mile stretch of Howard Gap Road, from Brookside Camp Road to U.S. 64. In addition to widening the road, contractors have added turn lanes, straightened some curves, and built two new bridges.

"The project has been completed about two months ahead of schedule," says NCDOT Division 14 Construction Engineer Brian Burch. "We started with a great set of plans from the private engineering firm, maintained great communication with our contractors and subcontractors, and had crews aggressively tackling the work."

NCDOT awarded a \$7.8 million contract to NHM Constructors of Asheville for the work, which started in July 2013. Most of what remains to be done involves establishing vegetation along the roadside. NHM has until May 15, 2016 to finish that.

The new improved stretch of Howard Gap Road connects to a nearly four-mile section from Brookside Camp north to Jackson Road, where NCDOT finished similar improvements this summer. The road parallels I-26 and U.S. 25/25 Business, and is an important corridor through Henderson County. [Learn more.](#)

Division 14 Board

Member: Jack Debnam

North Carolina native Jack Debnam grew up in the Raleigh area before moving to Jackson County. He attended Louisburg College and worked in the grading and timber business, then founded Western Carolina Properties, a real estate firm in Dillsboro and Cullowhee.



Jack Debnam

He has served in leadership positions on many civic and real estate boards. He was twice president of the Northern Jackson Board of Realtors, and chairman of the MLS board. He was a founding board member and past president of Jackson County Habitat for Humanity and A.W.A.K.E., a child advocacy organization. Debnam has served as the chairman of the Jackson County Planning Board, and has been part of the executive boards of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce and Southwestern Regional Commission.

Most recently, he served as chairman of the Jackson County



NCDOT News

For additional project updates and travel information, visit the [NCDOT newsroom](#).

Board of Commissioners, the only unaffiliated commission chairman ever elected in the state.

"We have tremendous opportunities here in the western-most part of North Carolina," Debnam says. "I appreciate the chance to serve the residents of Division 14, and will continue to eagerly work with NCDOT staff to find the best ways to further improve our connectivity."

He is married with two children and five grandchildren.

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